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Ontario Women's Directorate

NEWS RELEASE

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ONTARIO GOVERNMENT UNVEILS NEW AWARD TO HONOUR WOMEN

"Leading Women, Building Communities" Award Recognizes Exceptional Leadership

TORONTO – Minister Responsible for Women's Issues Sandra Pupatello today announced Ontario's first recipient of a new government award that honours women for exceptional community leadership.

"I am pleased to present the first-ever 'Leading Women, Building Communities' award to Ontario Provincial Police Commissioner Gwen Boniface," said Pupatello. "On International Women's Day, it is especially appropriate that we celebrate a woman who has demonstrated exceptional leadership and serves as a role model for women and girls."

The award, which recognizes women whose leadership helps improve the lives of women and girls in Ontario, was presented at a ceremony held today at Queen's Park. MPPs have been invited to nominate candidates for the award from their ridings. "Leading Women, Building Communities" award recipients will receive a Certificate of Recognition.

"I am honoured and humbled to be selected as the inaugural recipient of this award," said Commissioner Boniface. "I hope this award will encourage more women to assume leadership roles so that a strong female voice is heard in each and every community in Ontario."

Future award recipients will include women who:

- Champion issues and lead improvements in the lives of women and girls in their community
- Bring people together in the community to create positive social change
- Support the participation of women from diverse ethno/racial/cultural communities in the social and economic life of the community
- Take initiative to create communities where women and children live free from violence
- Promote women and girls' health and well-being (physical, mental, emotional) through education, community service and/or research
- Provide young women with guidance, mentoring and coaching, and opportunities for empowerment
- Build networks, break new ground or remove barriers to support women's participation in their chosen field of endeavour
- Encourage and support women to engage in the political process.

"There are women all across Ontario who, like Commissioner Boniface, make a positive difference in the lives of women and girls and who contribute to building strong and safe communities," said Pupatello. "This award is an opportunity to affirm for all women in Ontario that the life they want to achieve is possible.

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